



News From MAIENstreet

A Neighborhood Newsletter From Councilman Brian Maienschein

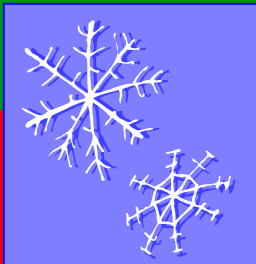


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Volume 3, Issue 8

Proudly Representing the
District Five
Communities of:

*Carmel Mountain Ranch
Mira Mesa
Rancho Bernardo
Sabre Springs
San Pasqual
Scripps Ranch
Sorrento Mesa
Sorrento Valley*



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Maienschein Waives Fees to Rebuild Scripps Ranch

This fall, the City Council approved Councilmember Maienschein's proposal to waive fees associated with rebuilding homes destroyed in the Cedar Fire. Following are the comments he made before the City Council voted on the proposal.

"This certainly is an emotional issue for all those affected by this and, frankly, this is an emotional issue for me as well. We all know the figures of devastation but in Scripps Ranch and Tierrasanta 327 homes were totally destroyed, 61 were damaged, 15 commercial structures were destroyed and one was damaged. In the aftermath of this, it has been amazing to see neighbors coming together, strangers helping people and volunteers giving in so many ways. I think this tragedy has stimulated a really unprecedented outpouring of compassion by other San Diegans. The Local Assistance Center in Scripps Ranch, without question, has proven to be a huge success. I am really proud of the City Staff who have elevated their customer service to absolutely the highest level I have seen in my time on the City Council.

There are a lot of people I want to recognize but in particular I want to thank our City Manager, Mike Uberuaga, Lamont Ewell, Tina Christiansen, Elmer Heap and Chris Gonover from the City and so many others. Obviously having Debra Fischle-Faulk and literally hundreds over there helping out has been an excellent way that the City has shown they can operate. To give my colleagues an idea of what has been going on there, as of yesterday, at the Center, there were 2,136 front desk sign-ins and 14,990 individual station visits. At the crisis intervention booth, which is one I think of note, we had 894 contacts to try and help people get back on their feet after this very devastating turn of events. We have already issued 206 demolition permits. We have 116 pending approval after more information is provided. And, remarkably, only 36 homes that were lost have not checked in for services there which is absolutely unbelievable.

This will be the biggest rebuilding effort in the history of San Diego, and I think it is essential that the City Council provide a streamline process to help these people get their lives back in order.

So, today, what I am proposing is one way that we can help. We need to waive the permit fees to help the residents get their property cleared and the debris removed. We need to do it in a way that will not set them back as they begin their very first project towards the very lengthy rebuilding. I have heard debate before about whether property owners are insured or under-insured and that insurance companies should pay for this. The reality is everybody who lost a home is going to get a check, one check, to rebuild their entire home so whatever they spend on permit fees is going to come out of what it takes for them to rebuild their home. So this, without question, would come out of the pockets of the homeowners, and I think, as Karen Reimus said, we are going to see a remarkable number of people like her. She bought her house just 4 months ago and is under insured. We are going to see a number of people who share that problem, so it is imperative that we do this.

This last weekend when I was at the Center, I went outside to watch the soccer games that were going on, the kids' soccer games, and it was very obvious which kids had

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(FEE WAIVERS-Continued from page 1)

lost their homes because they did not have matching uniforms. They looked a little bit out of place. They probably felt very out of place. We don't have any kids coming down today to testify, but I can tell you how much trauma those kids have gone through and I would also say to my colleagues that I am always the one for streamlining meetings so I did not request everyone from Scripps Ranch come out here today but we would have filled this room up with fire victims if we had wanted to. We could have filled it up with people from Scripps Ranch who did not lose their homes and with people throughout the City who want to help out. I appreciate you (pointing to fire victims who came to speak) being representative of those people but this could have been a 12-hour meeting today if we would have had all the people asking for City Council's assistance. With those kids, insurance is not going to replace all that they have lost. It is not going to replace it for the parents - it won't replace the photos, it's not going to replace the wedding videos, the baby videos, the Mother's Day cards, the first drawings that those kids made for their parents in kindergarten that they saved all these years. It is not going to replace any of that and we're going to have this emotional trauma that we are going to have to deal with - not just for these next two years or three years as we rebuild but really from now on. This is one small step that the City Council can take that shows we are compassionate to what these people have lost.

I know much has been said by me of the Scripps Ranch community, in particular, but I would say this of San Diego as a whole - willingness to do whatever it takes to make one's community strong and whole is the essence of community spirit. We have not only seen this in Scripps Ranch, we have seen this in Tierrasanta. I know Mr. Madaffer has told me about it and we have seen it everywhere in the City of San Diego. And I think if you want to know what the community wants to do in a situation like this, in my belief and I may have seen this closer than others have, the will of the community at large is quite clear. They want this to happen and I know they do because I have seen the amount of donations that have come in. I was there when we had so many donations that we started sending them out to Crest and to Julian because we had too many.

It is pretty clear, in my view, what the people of San Diego desire. It is clear by what they have given in this situation. If you are talking about being insured for \$100/sq. ft., that is not close to what it is going to take to rebuild and so waiving permit fees - if that gets these people that much closer, it is well worth it. The other thing I would say, too, that has not been raised before but the sooner we get the rebuilding process going, the sooner these victims return to productivity in our local community, the sooner construction can begin which also again will help. Without belaboring this anymore, I am going to do my best to remain calm during all of this (discussion by other councilmembers) but I would say that Oakland waived their permit fees - they were reimbursed so if anyone has concerns about that, FEMA did come in but FEMA does not write checks on the front end so we are always going to have to wait for reimbursement but Oakland was one of the cities that got this done.

I imagine if Oakland can get this done, we will be able to get it done too and get reimbursed. Even having said that, this is a crisis and an emergency of really historical proportions in San Diego and if ever there was a time for the City to step up and spend \$2.5million - even if that is what it ends up being at the end of the day - I somewhat dispute this figure a little bit and I think we will end up getting reimbursed but even if it was more than \$2.5million, now is the time to do that and the City should never ever be in a position where it profits from people's misery. With that, I will make the following motion: I would move that the Council approve the Manager's recommendations in his report on this issue dated November 13, 2003, and the recommendations are as follows: 1) Waive demolition permit fees; waste disposal fees and reimburse the cost pay to acceptable recycling facilities for recycling concrete slabs and bricks associated with the demolition of fire damage or destroyed building property within the City of San Diego, waive building permit fees for the replacement of those buildings as described in the attached draft resolution that the City Council directed be prepared that is attached to the report. 2) To designate the fire reconstruction permit application resulting from the 2003 Firestorm to be the highest priority for expedited development review of building permits in the City of San Diego. That's my motion."

(Councilmember Malenschein's motion passed 6-3.)

Sprucing up the Sikes Adobe

SAN PASQUAL— I am pleased to announce that several improvements are being made in order to prepare for the Grand Opening of the Historic Sikes Adobe Farmhouse in San Pasqual.

On December 6, 2003 I was joined by representatives of the San Dieguito River Park, SDG&E and the San Diego Urban Corps, as well as several community volunteers, to plant 16 trees along Sunset Drive at the Sikes Adobe Farmhouse site.

In addition to the tree planting, several volunteers and I began painting the exterior of the farmhouse. These "paint work parties" will continue every Saturday until the Grand Opening of the Sikes Adobe on January 31, 2004.



Free Christmas Tree Giveaway

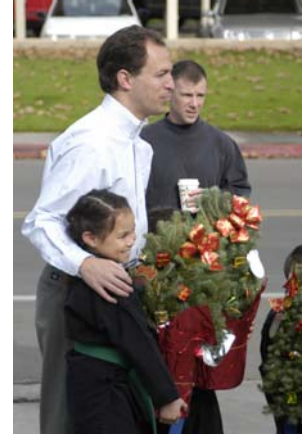
MIRA MESA — On Saturday, December 13, I distributed 250 miniature Christmas trees to Mira Mesa residents. I was assisted by members of the San Diego Youth Commission and San Diego Fire-Rescue Department.

The 28-inch trees, donated by Pinery Tree Farms, were given away on a first-come, first-served basis at Fire Station No. 38, next to Mira Mesa Community Park.

The Christmas tree giveaway provided Councilmember Maienschein with an opportunity to thank the community for all of its support throughout the year.

The event was one of many outreach activities the San Diego Youth Commission participated in this year. Maienschein and the Youth Commission have made community outreach a priority throughout the City of San Diego.

The Youth Commission, an advisory council with 23 members age 14 to 22, was created by Maienschein in 2002.



Maienschein Implements Erosion Control Plan

SCRIPPS RANCH — Soon after the devastating Cedar Fire destroyed 312 homes in this community, I became concerned with the effects of winter rain on the hills that no longer held vegetation. We took immediate action to address these concerns by organizing a comprehensive effort to address the many problems we faced.

We began with our sandbag project, in which hundreds of volunteers filled and distributed more than 20,000 sandbags at Jerabek Park. The white sandbags and gravel bags, which have become a familiar sight along the edges of burned lots and driveways, protect the drainage ditches on scorched slopes and help prevent sediment from shifting.

And as yet another method of controlling erosion, the City of San Diego's streets division and volunteers lined the sides of storm drains with gravel bags and mesh and fiber rolls to prevent debris from seeping into the water system.

To address erosion control measures on the City-owned open space and land owned by Homeowners' Associations, the City of San Diego has hired GeoSyntec, an engineering consulting firm with 25 offices throughout the United States, including Rancho Bernardo.

Shortly after the fire, representatives from GeoSyntec and the City surveyed all of the burned slopes and other affected areas to study the potential for hazards such as mudslides, flooding and debris flow. The following factors were taken into consideration during the team's evaluation: public health and safety, public and private property damage, infrastructure damage, damage to vehicle access points and damage affecting the water system.

Using the data collected, GeoSyntec has developed a plan to address each of the problem areas. The company has compiled a detailed report in the form of high, medium and low priorities. Treatment of the affected areas usually consists of the installation of fiber rolls, as well as hydraulic mulching, a process where mulch is applied to provide stabilization and revegetation of bare slopes.



*A Neighborhood Newsletter From
Councilman Brian Maienschein*

News From MAIENstreet
City Administration Building
202 C Street, MS 10-A
San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: 619-236-6655
Fax: 619-238-0915
Email: BMaienschein@sandiego.gov
Web: www.sandiego.gov/city-council/district-5

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It's a pleasure to serve you on the San Diego City Council!